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Second College Edition

<sup>The</sup>  
**American Heritage  
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Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data  
Main entry under title:

American Heritage dictionary.

Rev. ed. of: American Heritage dictionary of the English language. New college ed. c1976.

1. English language—Dictionaries. I. Morris, William, 1913—

PE1625.A54 1982 423 82-9346

ISBN 0-395-32943-4

ISBN 0-395-32944-2 (thumb index)

ISBN 0-395-33959-6 (deluxe edition)

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# The American Heritage Dictionary

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**muter special**. 2. A featured article at a special on lamb chops. 3. A section that features a specific work or performer. [ME < OFr. *speciales*, kind. —see SPECIES.] —**special**, *n.*

**nd specially** have wider application. In the senses that it shares with *special* is now much more common. Specially rare and is used chiefly to outstanding quality: a work of *specially* on the other hand is placed by *specially*. *Specially* is used in the sense of "particularly": He's *specially* talented. *Especially* is the best policy, *especially*.

live act that applies only to a particular

**l n., pl. special courts-martial** a group of at least three officers for trying

e delivery of a piece of mail, for a special messenger rather than for

sual or sound effects added to a television show during processing division of the U.S. Army composed in guerrilla fighting. The handling of fourth-class or post office mail for an extra charge. **iz'am** *n.* 1. Confinement or limitation of study or occupation. 2. A field

**l n.** 1. a. A person who has devoted a branch of study or research, b. A practice in a specified field. 2. Any person in the U.S. Army that corresponds to sergeant first class. —**specialist**, *n.*

**l(-tē) n., pl. -ties**. 1. A distinguishing quality. Special points of consideration. *Chiefly Brit.* A specialty. **h'a-li-zā'shān** *n.* The act of specializing or becoming specialized.

**l(-tē) v.** -ized, -izing, -izes. —**intr.** 1. To be in a special study or activity. 2. To become adapted to a specific environment. 3. To concentrate on a particular activity. *Specializes in mountain-climbing gear.* **l(-tē) v.** -ized, -izing, -izes. —**intr.** 1. To be in a special study or activity. 2. To become adapted to a specific environment. 3. To concentrate on a particular activity. *Specializes in mountain-climbing gear.* **l(-tē) v.** -ized, -izing, -izes. —**intr.** 1. To be in a special study or activity. 2. To become adapted to a specific environment. 3. To concentrate on a particular activity. *Specializes in mountain-climbing gear.*

chosen by the court upon request of a better-qualified candidate for a complex issue of fact.

**Law.** The assertion of new or special issues party's allegations, as an alternative. 2. A presentation of an argument in favor of or a single aspect of the

ie physical theory of space and time Einstein that is based on the postulates of relativity are equally valid in all nonaccelerated frames and that light is propagated in a vacuum at a constant speed and that the relativistic mass increase of rapidly moving objects is a consequence of the Lorentz contraction, time dilatation, and mass-energy equivalence.

extraordinary session of a court or of

**lity n.** Special relativity. **n., pl. -ties**. 1. A special pursuit, occupation, or skill. 2. An aspect of medicine that is their practice. 3. A special feature or quality. 4. The state or quality of being a contract or agreement, esp. a deed

**ā'shān, (-sē-) n.** The evolutionary process by which new species are formed. [SPEC(ES)]

**l** Coined money; coin. —**Idiom.** *in the same kind or (in) kind* < ablative of *species*. —**see**

**n., pl. species**. 1. *Biol.* a. A fundamental classification, ranking after a genus, of organisms capable of interbreeding and producing such a category, represented by a Latin adjective or epithet followed by a noun. 2. *Logic.* A class of individuals having in common attributes and a common name; a division subordinate to a genus or type. 4. *Obs.* An outward form or

appearance. 5. *Rom. Cath. Ch.* a. The outward appearance or form of the Eucharistic elements that is retained after their consecration. b. Either of the consecrated elements of the Eucharist. 6. *Obs. Specie.* [Lat. *species*, appearance, kind < *specere*, to look at.]

**spec-i-fi-a-ble** (spēs'ə-fī-ə-bəl) *adj.* Capable of being specified.

**spec-i-fi-c** (spī-sī'fīk) *adj.* 1. Explicitly set forth; definite. 2. Pertaining to, characterizing, or distinguishing a species. 3. Special, distinctive, or unique, as a quality or attribute. 4. Intended for, applying to, or acting upon a particular thing. 5. Denoting a disease produced by a particular microorganism or condition. 6. a. Denoting a customs charge levied upon merchandise by unit or weight rather than according to value. b. Denoting a commodity rate applicable to the transportation of a single commodity between named points. —**n.** 1. Something specific, as a quality, statement, or attribute. 2. A remedy intended for a particular ailment or disorder. [Med. Lat. *specificus* < Lat. *species*, kind, species.] —**spec-i-fi-cal-ly** *adv.* —**spec-i-fi-ci-ty** (spēs'ə-fī-sī-tē) *n.* **spec-i-fi-ca-tion** (spēs'ə-fī-kā'shān) *n.* 1. An act of specifying. 2. a. A specification. A detailed and exact statement of particulars, esp. a statement prescribing materials, dimensions, and workmanship for something to be built, installed, or manufactured. b. A single item or article that has been specified. 3. An exact written description of an invention by an applicant for a patent.

**specific gravity** *n.* The ratio of the mass of a solid or liquid to the mass of an equal volume of distilled water at 4°C or of a gas to an equal volume of air or hydrogen under prescribed conditions of temperature and pressure.

**specific heat** *n.* 1. The ratio of the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of a unit mass of a substance by one unit of temperature to the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of a similar mass of a reference material, usually water, by the same amount. 2. The amount of heat, measured in calories, required to raise the temperature of one gram of a substance by one centigrade degree.

**specific impulse** *n.* A performance measure for rocket propellants that is equal to units of thrust per unit weight of propellant consumed per unit time.

**specific performance** *n. Law.* The performance of a legal contract as specified in its terms.

**specific resistance** *n. Elect.* Resistivity (sense 2).

**specific thrust** *n.* Specific impulse.

**spec-i-fi-ty** (spēs'ə-fī-tē) *tr.v.* -fied, -fying, -fies. 1. To state explicitly. 2. To include in a specification. [ME *specifien* < OFr. *specifier* < Med. Lat. *specificare* < *specificus*, specific.]

**spec-i-men** (spēs'ə-mən) *n.* 1. An individual, item, or part taken as representative of an entire set or whole; sample. 2. A sample, as of tissue, blood, or urine, used for analysis and diagnosis. [Lat., example < *specere*, to look at.]

**spec-i-ous** (spēs'chəs) *adj.* 1. Deceptively attractive. 2. Having the ring of truth or plausibility but actually fallacious: a *specious* argument. [ME, attractive < Lat. *speciosus* < *species*, appearance < *specere*, to look at.] —**spec-i-ous-ly** *adv.* —**spec-i-ous-ness** *n.*

**speck** (spēk) *n.* 1. A small spot, mark, or discoloration. 2. A very small bit; particle. —**tr.v.** specked, speck-ing, specks. To mark with specks. [ME *specke* < OE *specca*.]

**speck-le** (spēk'əl) *n.* A speck or small spot, esp. a natural dot of color on skin, plumage, or foliage. —**tr.v.** -led, -ling, -les. To mark or cover with or as if with speckles. [ME *spakle*, perh. of MLG orig.]

**speck-led** (spēk'əld) *adj.* 1. Dotted or covered with speckles. 2. Speckled with small spots of contrasting color. 2. Of a mixed character; motley.

**speckled trout** *n.* The brook trout.

**specs** (spēks) *pl.n. Informal.* 1. Also *specks*. Eyeglasses; spectacles. 2. Specifications (sense 2.a.).

**spec-ta-cle** (spēk'tā-kəl) *n.* 1. A public performance or display. 2. a. An object of interest. b. A regrettable public display, as of bad behavior: *made a spectacle of himself*. 3. a. Something seen or capable of being seen. b. The sight of something. 4. *spectacles*. a. Glasses (sense 4.b.). b. Something resembling eyeglasses in shape or suggesting them in function. [ME < OFr. < Lat. *spectaculum* < *spectare*, to watch, freq. of *specere*, to look at.]

**spec-ta-cled** (spēk'tā-kəld) *adj.* 1. Wearing spectacles. 2. Having markings suggesting spectacles. Used of animals.

**spec-tac-u-lar** (spēk'tāk'yā-lər) *adj.* Of the nature of a spectacle; sensational. —**n.** A single theatrical production of unusual length or lavishness. —**spec-tac-u-lar-ly** (*-lār'ī-tē*) *adv.* —**spec-tac-u-lar-ly** *adv.*

**spec-ta-tor** (spēk'tā-tər) *n.* An observer of an event. [Lat. *spectator* < *spectare*, to watch. —see SPECTACLE.]

**spec-ter** (spēk'tər) *n.* 1. A phantom; apparition. 2. A threatening or haunting possibility: *the terrible specter of nuclear war*. [Fr. *spectre* < Lat. *spectrum*, appearance < *specere*, to look at.]

**spec-tra** (spēk'trə) *n.* A plural of spectrum.

**spec-tral** (spēk'trəl) *adj.* 1. Of or resembling a spectrum; ghostly. 2. Of, pertaining to, or produced by a spectrum. —**spec-tral-ly** (*-trāl'ī-tē*), **spec-tral-ness** *n.* —**spec-tral-ly** *adv.*

**spectral line** *n.* An isolated peak of intensity in a spectrum,

esp. one of the visible dispersed images of the slit through which light enters the collimator of a spectroscopic, produced by light of a single wavelength.

**spec-tre** (spēk'tər) *n. Chiefly Brit.* Variant of *specter*.

**spectro-** *pref.* Spectrum: *spectrograph*. [< SPECTRUM.]

**spec-tro-graph** (spēk'trə-grāf) *n.* A graph or photograph of a spectrum.

**spec-tro-graph** (spēk'trə-grāf) *n.* 1. A spectroscopic instrument used to photograph spectra. 2. A spectrogram. —**spec-tro-graph-ic** *adj.* —**spec-tro-graph-ical-ly** *adv.* —**spec-tro-graph-ic** (*-trōg'rā-fē*) *n.*

**spec-tro-he-li-o-graph** (spēk'trō-hē-lē-ō-grāf) *n.* A photograph of the sun taken in a narrow wavelength band centered on a selected wavelength.

**spec-tro-he-li-o-graph** (spēk'trō-hē-lē-ō-grāf) *n.* An instrument used to make spectroheliograms. —**spec-tro-he-li-o-graph-ic** *adj.* —**spec-tro-he-li-o-graph-ic** (*-ōg'rā-fē*) *n.*

**spec-tro-he-li-o-scope** (spēk'trō-hē-lē-ō-skōp) *n.* An instrument used to observe solar radiation. —**spec-tro-he-li-o-scope** (*-skōp'īk*) *adj.*

**spec-trom-e-ter** (spēk'trōm'ē-tər) *n.* A spectroscopic instrument equipped with scales for measuring the positions of spectral lines. [SPECTRO(SCOPE) + -METER.] —**spec-trom-e-ter** (*-trō-mē'trīk*) *adj.* —**spec-trom-e-try** *n.*

**spec-tro-pho-tom-e-ter** (spēk'trō-fō-tōm'ē-tər) *n. Physics.* An instrument used to determine the distribution of energy in a spectrum of luminous radiation. —**spec-tro-pho-tom-e-ter** (*-fō-tō-mē'trīk*) *adj.* —**spec-tro-pho-tom-e-try** *n.*

**spec-tro-scope** (spēk'trə-skōp) *n.* Any of various instruments for resolving and observing or recording spectra. —**spec-tro-scope** (*-skōp'īk*), **spec-tro-scope** (*-skōp'īk*) *adj.* —**spec-tro-scope** (*-skōp'īk*) *adv.*

**spectroscopic analysis** *n.* The analysis of a spectrum to determine characteristics of its source, as the analysis of the optical spectrum of an incandescent body to determine its composition or motion.

**spec-tro-sco-py** (spēk'trōs'kō-pē) *n.* The study of spectra, esp. the experimental observation of optical spectra. —**spec-tro-sco-pist** *n.*

**spectrum** (spēk'trəm) *n., pl. -tra* (*-trā*) or *-trums*. 1. *Physics.* The distribution of a characteristic of a physical system or phenomenon, esp.: a. The distribution of energy emitted by a radiant source, as by an incandescent body, arranged in order of wavelengths. b. The distribution of atomic or subatomic particles in a system, as in a magnetically resolved molecular beam, arranged in order of masses. c. A graphic or photographic representation of such a distribution. 2. a. A range of values of a quantity or set of related quantities. b. A broad sequence or range of related qualities, ideas, or activities: *the whole spectrum of 20th-century thought*. [Lat., appearance < *specere*, to look at.] **spec-u-la** (spēk'yā-lā) *n.* A plural of *spectrum*. **spec-u-lar** (spēk'yā-lər) *adj.* Of, resembling, or produced by a mirror or speculum.

**spec-u-late** (spēk'yā-lāt) *tr.v.* -lated, -lat-ing, -lates. 1. To meditate on a given subject; reflect. 2. To engage in the buying or selling of a commodity with an element of risk on the chance of profit. [Lat. *speculari*, *speculat-*, to observe < *specula*, watchtower < *specere*, to look at.] **spec-u-la-tion** (spēk'yā-lā'shān) *n.* 1. a. The act of speculating. b. Contemplation of a profound nature. c. A conclusion, opinion, or theory reached by speculating. 2. a. Engagement in risky business transactions on the chance of quick or considerable profit. b. An instance of speculating.

**spec-u-la-tive** (spēk'yā-lā-tiv, -lā'-) *adj.* 1. Of, characterized by, or based upon contemplative speculation. 2. a. Given to speculation or conjecture. b. Spent in speculation. 3. a. Engaging in, given to, or involving financial speculation. b. Characteristic of speculation in the involvement of chance; risky. —**spec-u-la-tive-ly** *adv.* —**spec-u-la-tive-ness** *n.*

**spec-u-la-tor** (spēk'yā-lā-tər) *n.* One that speculates. **spec-u-lum** (spēk'yā-ləm) *n., pl. -la* (*-lā*) or *-lums*. 1. A mirror or polished metal plate used as a reflector in optical instruments. 2. An instrument for dilating the opening of a body cavity for medical examination. 3. *Biol.* a. A bright, often iridescent patch of color on the wings of certain birds, esp. ducks. b. A transparent spot in the wings of some butterflies or moths. [Lat., mirror < *specere*, to look at.]

**spe-d** (spēd) *v.* A past tense and past participle of *speed*. **speech** (spēch) *n.* 1. a. The faculty or act of speaking. b. The faculty or act of expressing or describing thoughts, feelings, or perceptions by the articulation of words. 2. Something that is spoken; utterance. 3. Vocal communication; conversation. 4. a. A talk or public address. b. A printed copy of an address. 5. A person's habitual manner or style of speaking. 6. The language or dialect of a nation or region. 7. The sounding of a musical instrument. 8. The study of oral communication, speech sounds, and vocal physiology. 9. *Archaic.* Rumor. [ME *speche* < OE *spæc*, *spæc*.]

**speech community** *n.* All speakers of a particular language or dialect, whether located in one area or scattered. **speech-ify** (spēch'ī-fī) *tr.v.* -fied, -fy-ing, -fies. To give a speech. —**speech-ify** (*-fī*) *n.*

**at / hw** which / ɪ pīt / ɪ pie / ɪr pie  
**oi** noise / ou out / oo took / oo boot

p pop / r roar / s sauce / sh ship, dish / t tight / th thin, path / th this, bathe / ū cut / ūr urge / v valve / w with / y yes / z zebra, size / zh vision / ɔ about, item, edible, gallop, circus / æ Fr. feu, Ger. schön / ū Fr. tu, Ger. über / KH Ger. ich, Scot. loch / N Fr. bon.